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Letter dated 18 May 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you a letter dated 14 May 2015 from the representative of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed S. **Al-Thani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 18 May 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the people of Syria and the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces, it is with great alarm that I draw your attention to a dangerous development on the chemical weapons track.

Contrary to the Syrian regime's repeated claims of compliance, it has now become apparent that the Syrian regime has repeatedly and systematically lied about the full extent of its chemical weapons stockpiles and has wilfully misled the Security Council with respect to its initial declaration to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

As was confirmed in the nineteenth monthly report of the Director-General of OPCW, distributed on 28 April 2015, the Declaration Assessment Team of OPCW continues to be deeply concerned regarding the analytical results of samples taken during three site visits to Syria in December 2014 and January 2015 (S/2015/295). Public reports indicate that subsequent OPCW laboratory analysis has revealed traces of banned toxic chemicals in at least three regime-held military locations inside Syria. OPCW investigators have identified sarin, a nerve agent, in drainage pipes and artillery shells and ricin, a banned toxin, in a scientific research centre.

The continued existence of sarin and ricin in Syrian regime military facilities is a clear violation of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), in which the Security Council unanimously decided "that the Syrian Arab Republic shall not use, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons" and, in which the Syrian regime agreed to declare, within seven days of the adoption of the OPCW Executive Council Decision on the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, the location of "all of its chemical weapons".

There can no longer be any doubt: the Syrian regime has consistently violated Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and defied the will of the Security Council. It has done so in four key ways: (a) it continues to retain chemical weapons; (b) it has failed to declare those chemical weapons; (c) it continues to use those chemical weapons against its own people; and (d) it continues to deny OPCW investigators access to Syrian territories where illegal chemical weapons attacks are being perpetrated with impunity.

It is high time that the will of the Security Council was enforced. We now know incontrovertibly that Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) has been violated and we know which party is to blame: the Syrian regime. Rather than waste precious time and resources deliberating over the adoption of a new fact-finding mission on chemical weapons, the facts of which are already clear to all, the Security Council must move with urgency to save lives and prevent the further use of chemical weapons in Syria. After close to two years of systematic use of chemical weapons, it is incumbent upon members of the Council to enforce Security Council resolutions 2118 (2013) and 2209 (2015) and impose measures under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, as both of these resolutions require.

On behalf of the Syrian people, I therefore ask that Member States work without delay to:

- Stop ongoing chemical weapons attacks by authorizing a no-fly zone capable of effectively stopping the principal vehicle for the delivery of chemical weapons in Syria: barrel bombs dropped from Syrian regime helicopters;
- Sanction Syrian regime officials for their repeated use of chemical weapons, including through the application of Chapter VII measures of the Charter;
- Demand that the Fact-Finding Mission of OPCW visit locations of suspected chlorine gas attacks in Idlib and Hama, with or without regime consent. OPCW investigators must move with urgency to collect samples inside Syria. The refusal of the Syrian regime to allow OPCW investigators direct access to the site of chemical weapons attacks must not be allowed to impede the collection of vital evidence. For that reason, the Syrian Coalition and its partner on the ground, the Free Syrian Army, offer our full assistance to facilitate OPCW access to the areas in question;
- Refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court so as to lay the path towards accountability and ensure that all those guilty of war crimes are held responsible in a court of law.

The evidence of the continued existence of sarin in Syria is just the latest example of the Syrian regime's wilful manipulation of the Security Council. Since the Council adopted resolution 2209 (2015) prohibiting the use of chlorine gas, Syrian regime forces have used chlorine gas more than a dozen times to terrorize and kill innocent civilians in opposition-held areas. The Syrian regime's deliberate deceit and its ongoing perpetration of chemical weapons attacks can be stopped through Security Council action, including through the authorization of a no-fly zone. Should the Security Council fail to find the will and consensus needed to authorize a no-fly zone, then I implore Member States to act on their own authority to end impunity and provide the protection my people need.

(*Signed*) Najib **Ghadbian**
Special Representative to the United Nations